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Public Power
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December 2, 2011

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Surface Transportation Board
Attn: Docket No. LP 526 (Sub-No. 3)
395 I Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20423-0001

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Dear Sir or Madam:

In response to the Surface Transportation Board's (STB) decision in Docket No. EP 526 (Sub-No. 3), I nominate Shelley Sahling-Zart as a candidate for membership on the Rail Shipper Transportation Advisory Council (RSTAC). Ms. Sahling-Zart, if appointed, is willing to serve the full three-year term ending December 31, 2014.

Ms. Sahling-Zart is Vice President, Communications & Corporate Records and General Counsel for Lincoln Electric System (LES), a municipal utility in Lincoln, Nebraska. LES provides retail and wholesale power to over 125,000 customers in 200 square miles within Lancaster County in Nebraska, including the cities and towns of Lincoln, Waverly, Walton, Prairie Home, Cheney and Emerald. LES, like many municipal utilities, relies on coal and the shipment thereof to provide cost-based electricity to its customers.

Unfortunately, LES and many other coal-burning utilities have no choice but to receive coal shipments from only one rail carrier, and are thus subject to monopolistic behavior by railroads. As a result, these rail customers do not have the ability to negotiate the terms of their rail transportation in an open and competitive market. These "captive" rail customers are charged higher rail rates while those rail customers with more than one viable transportation option are given competitively priced rates. Higher rail rates can often mean increased electricity rates for customers of these captive utilities, especially in the case of a municipal utility and the cost-based electricity it provides.

Ms. Sahling-Zart is intimately familiar with the problems facing captive shippers from her work on this issue on behalf of LES. If appointed, she will be an effective advocate for shippers and will capably assist the RSTAC in advising the STB on rail policy.

Sincerely,

Mark Crisson
President & CEO

MC/WC/SP